

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action mailed June 18, 2008, has been carefully reviewed and these remarks are responsive thereto. Claims 3, 6, 11, 15, and 16 were previously canceled. Claim 22 has been added in the present paper. No new subject matter has been added. Claims 1, 2-5, 7-10, 12-14, and 17-22 are pending upon entry of the present paper. Reconsideration and allowance of the instant application are respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 7 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter recited therein. This rejection is traversed.

Amended independent claim 21 recites “means for detecting the presence of a host externally connected to the bus, wherein the host module is responsive to the means for detecting the presence of the host for relinquishing host status in response to the detection of the presence of the host externally connected to the bus, and wherein the bus passes a signal directly from the first port to the second port responsive to the relinquishment of host status.” Applicant submits that amended claim 21 provides for an interrelationship between the means for detecting the presence of a host externally connected to the bus and the other recited, structural elements. As such, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the section 112 rejection as applied to claim 21.

Amended claim 7 recites “. . . in which the device is arranged for causing at least one signal line of the bus coupled to the host module to be forced tri-state on detecting the presence of the host externally connected to the bus.” Applicant submits that the scope/language of claim 7 has been clarified as a result of such an amendment in view of at least paragraph [0028] of the instant application specification. In particular, paragraph [0028] provides by way of illustration that an accessory device 12 may relinquish host status by going tri-state, or that is to say, presenting high impedance to D⁺ and D⁻ lines 115. As such, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the section 112 rejection of claim 7.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-10, 14, and 17-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. patent no. 6,516,205 to Oguma (“Oguma”). This rejection is traversed.

Amended independent claim 1 recites, among other features, “wherein the bus passes a signal directly from the first port to the second port responsive to the relinquishment of host status.” The amended features recited in claim 1 are supported by the specification when read as a whole, and in particular, by paragraphs [0028] and [0031] and Figures 1 and 3.

Oguma at col. 3, line 48 – col. 4, line 62 and Figure 3 describe an automatic switching mechanism incorporated in a portable phone as a mobile terminal. Oguma fails to disclose the above-noted features of amended claim 1, with respect to the automatic switching mechanism described in Oguma, for reasons substantially similar to those discussed at pages 6-8 of Applicant’s Amendment dated April 24, 2008. In short, even if the upstream port (e.g., D+ 11, D- 12, Vbus 41, and GND 42) of Oguma could appropriately be analogized to the recited first port, and the downstream port (e.g., D+ 31, D- 32, Vbus 53, and GND 54) of Oguma could appropriately be analogized to the recited second port, Oguma fails to disclose features related to a bus passing a signal *directly* from the upstream port to the downstream port as recited in claim 1. Instead, Oguma imposes intervening components and circuits (which include bus manager circuit 62, hub unit 63, and power supply switching circuit 65) to perform any sort of pass-through function. Indeed, Oguma at col. 4, lines 18-22 describes that when host personal computer 1 operates as a bus manager, bus manager circuit 62 stops or invalidates a bus manager function and pass through the signal between host personal computer 1 and bus peripheral units. Thus, Oguma fails to disclose all of the features of claim 1, and claim 1 is allowable for at least these reasons.

Claim 17 includes in its recitation a device as in claim 1, and is therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1.

Amended claims 19 and 21 recite features similar to those described above with respect to claim 1. Thus, claims 19 and 21 are allowable for at least reasons substantially similar to those discussed with respect to claim 1.

Claims 2, 4, 5, 7-10, 14, 18, and 20, which each depend from at least one of claims 1, 17 and 19, are allowable for at least the same reasons as their respective base claims.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 12 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oguma. This rejection is traversed below.

Claims 12 and 13 each depend from claim 1, and are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

New Claim

Claim 22 has been added in the present paper, and is supported by the specification when read as a whole, and in particular, by paragraphs [0028] and [0031] and Figures 1 and 3.

Claim 22 depends from claim 1. Claim 22 recites “wherein the bus includes a signal line, and wherein the signal line passes the signal directly from the first port to the second port responsive to the relinquishment of host status.” Oguma fails to disclose these features. As discussed above with respect to claim 1, Oguma at Figure 3 places intervening components/circuits between the upstream port and the downstream port. As such, Oguma fails to disclose a device operable as a host device, the device including a bus (as recited in claim 1), wherein the bus includes a signal line, and wherein the signal line passes the signal directly from the first port to the second port responsive to the relinquishment of host status as required by claim 22. As such, claim 22 is allowable over Oguma based on the lack of direct passing in Oguma.

CONCLUSION

All rejections having been addressed, Applicant respectfully submits that the instant application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully solicits prompt notification of the same. However, if for any reason the Examiner believes the application is not in condition for allowance or there are any questions, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned counsel at (202) 824-3160.

Respectfully submitted,

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